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THE PIE-DISH
A PLAY IN ONE ACT
BY GEORGE FIZMAURICE



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CHARACTERS

LEUM DONOGHUE.

MARGARET }
JOHANNA } daughters to LEUM.

JACK }
EUGENE } sons to MARGARET.

FATHER TROY.

THE SCENE IS LAID IN NORTH KERRY.

SCENE.—*Interior of farm-house kitchen. Door at right. To left of door, table. Further to left of this, a settle-bed, window, door leading to bedroom. Fireplace on right side of kitchen, dresser on left.*

At rise of curtain LEUM DONOGHUE is discovered sitting on chair between settle-bed and table, sleeping and snoring. A pie-dish is on the table near him. EUGENE is sitting at fire kneading putty between his hands. JACK comes in slowly.

JACK (*looks at LEUM*). Isn't it easy in himself he is, Eugene, after all the fury that was on him a while ago, all through mother letting that screech to have some one go for the priest for him and he just rising out of that weakness? (*Going towards LEUM.*) 'Tis dozing he is, and if he isn't snoring itself! (*Coming to fireplace.*) Eugene, God forgive me!—but I couldn't help it, it's breaking my heart laughing I was and I stalling in the cows, every minute I'd think of my old durnawny here of eighty years and more, and the turn he got the time she screeched, he pure wild at the notion of leaving this world through means of his not having finished the making of an old pie-dish.

EUGENE (*sourly*). Isn't it great sport that's in it now entirely?

JACK. Ah, people needn't be so bitter in themselves if they have sprained the knee itself; howbe they are a little fine-drawn after being through the sixth book and the

arithmetic, and in course don't be as rough as me or the likes of me, a common, ignorant man. We can't help laughing, Eugene, when a funny thing like this comes across us, and it's a good joke there would be in it if yourself and the grandfather were fifty times the big chums ye are itself.

EUGENE (*sings bitterly*)—

One day as I chanced to go roving—
It being in the sweet month of May,
When Phoebus approaching most blooming
His brilliant and dazzling rays—
I met with a charming young fair one,
Whose aspects did me ensnare,
And she making her way to Dungarvan
It being of a market day.

JACK. Ah, 'tisn't a coolness we'll be having, Eugene, over a thing of nothing. Whisper—what turned me in again was this : the cows were tied up in the stall by me, and it's just on the points I was of making for the priest for the old lad here, when the sound of my name came to me like, and it mother's voice I thought.

EUGENE. Sure 'twas, but she's shy of rising it too high entirely, for fear she'd rouse grandfather. It's around to the hay-haggard she's gone on the search for you, I am thinking. It's a sudden tie she got to slip him in to the settle-bed, and she muttering to herself that you having the great strength you would be the best to rise him and put him into it, and it there longside him, and it's going on and talking to herself she was that 'twouldn't be all the bad if it's in the settle-bed itself she had him before the priest.

JACK. Amirra, what patch would it be on me to hyse him up in the room itself, if it's wishing to her it was, Eugene ?

EUGENE. Ha ! it's in dread of her life she'd be to do that, thinking he'd kick the traces and go wild all out if he woke

up and found himself there. But it's a fancy of hers that that great fury might come on him if he woke in the settle-bed with his pie-dish there on the table before him, and I softening the putty here at the fire for the ornaments that are to be the finishing of it.

JACK. It's nearly fit for the Asylum she is, I am thinking, over this old man ; but sure, isn't the fault her own that didn't keep her gob shut ? Eugene, it's you have great knowledge of what's in the brain of that old man—would the case have been different now if she didn't go making all that tooplaish the time he got the weakness ? Would it strike you at all he'd have let the priest anoint him quietly if his reverence had been slipped here to him unbeknownst ?

EUGENE (*roughly*). How does I know ?

JACK. Oyeh, you don't, maybe ! Wisha, 'tisn't so poisonous you need be, Eugene, the day that's in it, after I bringing you the new trouser from town and all.

EUGENE. 'Tis mother can tell you all of it. It's her hope anyways that the pure shame might put a stop to him from screeching, if he don't wake up till the priest is fornenst him and he in the settle-bed.

JACK. And will it be that way with him, Eugene ?

EUGENE. Yerra, how does I know ?

JACK (*angrily*). What way is that to be going on ? Isn't there that civility in you to answer yes, ay or no, like a man ?

EUGENE. Well, then, listen, Jack, and think of me : it's no content will ever be on him to die at all, and he not having finished the manufacturing of his pie-dish.

JACK (*in a hushed voice*). Eugene, it's an ignorant working-man I am, as you know, but it's a great scholard you are, and if there's brain-work in that pie-dish it isn't dull of it you can be if you were denying your knowledge from this till Mihilmas itself. Mother do be talking it's no cookery will ever be

done in it because of all them putty figarios that's on it, and I heard her say of a day, overright the old man himself, that 'tisn't the geraniums she put in it itself. It's pinching me in to find out what ingenuity is in it, Eugene, and for God's sake give us some hint of what in the wide world it is about at all.

EUGENE. Jack, I don't know no more than the dead, but all the same, as sure as I am telling it to you, it's great wonders are in that pie-dish. I was to know it all in the end when the last ornament was made on it, and he having it planned that I was to take the message to them to come and see it—old Moll of Carraweira, Teigue Rue of Scartaglen, and Jack Bui of Meenscubawn, them three old friends of his that he do be talking often of of late.

JACK (*goes to table and takes up pie-dish*). I never handled it before.

EUGENE. Leave it after you, Jack, or 'tis to let it slip and smash you will, and the big butter fingers that's on you.

JACK. I'll engage it won't fall out of my two hands and the holt I have of it. (*Ironically.*) How precious it is! (*Sways it about.*) Wisha, Eugene, what's in it after all but the pure clay and them putty figarios? what harm if there was shape or form in it like any pie-dish these two eyes ever seen? It's foolery it is. (*Replaces it on corner of table.*) Here, give a hand till I box this old angashore in the settle-bed and let me be going for the priest for him.

[EUGENE limps across floor. They raise LEUM off chair and place him in settle-bed.
MARGARET comes to threshold of entrance-door.

MARGARET. What a foherough was on that loobera, Jack, going for the priest! If it's to hurry I told him itself, couldn't he have known that the old man would have fallen into a

sleep, and what can I do with my whitlow, and Eugene emayshiated from his bad leg? (*Coming in.*) 'Tisn't often there'd be that foherough on our Jack. (*Seeing them.*) Oh, thank God! it's in the bed ye have him already. (*Goes to them.*) It's a great boy entirely you are, Jack, and do be making tracks now for the priest.

EUGENE (*to JACK*). Isn't it great awkwardness that's on you? If I didn't ketch it, it's to let his poor grey head you would fall back again the bolster with a slap.

JACK. It's all right he is now in sure, and let her be tucking the blankets about him. I'll redder the pipe for myself and off with me then for the priest.

[*JACK and EUGENE go to fire. JACK lights pipe; EUGENE takes up putty.*

MARGARET (*arranging bed-clothes*). Be making tracks; be going like the wind! Oh, if it was only the will of God to have Father Troy here now, wouldn't it be a comely thing to have this old man in the bed here before him, over being in that chair or prancing about the floor with the eyes lepping out of his head. (*JACK goes towards door.*) Wouldn't it rise the heart in me if it's the rites he got without letting a screech, and the neighbours never to be a bit the wiser of the way he was making tapes this day!

JACK (*from doorway*). From what Eugene has told me it's in dread I am of it; for let us be roaring at him or coaxing him, let him be in the bed or in the chair, it's all one if we can credit our Eugene, and he a scholard.

MARGARET. Be making lanes—what waiting have you at all?

JACK. But is it full sure you are now, Eugene, that 'twill be the same case with him, eh?

MARGARET. I am telling you be making tracks; be making lanes will you again?

JACK. But, maybe, it might not be the same case with him, Eugene, eh ?

MARGARET. Glory be to God ! Will you be going for the priest ?

JACK (*goes towards fire*). I am asking you, Eugene, maybe it might not be the same case with him now, eh ?

MARGARET (*goes to JACK and presses him towards doorway*). Will you be making lanes, I say ? will you be making tracks ? will you be putting on the scrapers ?

JACK. Isn't it big you are in yourself, Eugene. But it won't be the same case at all, I am thinking, but you and your talk and your knowledge out of the sixth book. Mukeerough !

[*Goes out.* MARGARET *goes and arranges bed-clothes on LEUM.* JOHANNA *comes in.*

JOHANNA. Boloeeriv ! It's hardly I'm able to say it with the weakness that's on me from the flaming sun of noon. What's cooped up in that box by you, Margaret ? (*Clapping her hands.*) In the name of all that's good, 'tisn't our poor father himself that's rolled up in that old settle-bed by you ?

MARGARET. Maybe 'tis well to have him in the settle-bed itself, Joan Bawn.

JOHANNA. 'Tisn't often I darken your doors, black Mage, but it's to your face I say it now, it's a shameful thing for you to be showing the poor old man but that respect overright the people and all.

EUGENE. Old people do often get a tie for them settle-beds, Aunt Joan.

JOHANNA. Don't be giving me talk, you little pleesbeen, and your grandfather in a settle-bed in the kitchen floor ! And 'tis me he left twenty years ago to come to live with you, Margaret, with all his talk of your good-nature, and that if you cut the head of him one minute, 'tis up to your neck in the river you'd go for him the next.

EUGENE (*aside*). It's fit she was to cut the head off him a while ago, sure enough.

JOHANNA (*sitting on chair near fire*). It's again I say it, Margaret, there's great shame on you to be having him there and the people coming in to you. But maybe 'tis the price of him and the great opinion he had out of you. I'll warrant 'tis little thanks I'll get from him to give under tramping it this day all the ways from Glounasroan, through bogs and through briars, through swamps and through rivers ; over dykes, ditches, cleakawns, and inches of felistrums, my legs bending under me, in a manner that I'd never make this cabin this day but for meeting with Marse Quilter of the sheebeen, that forced a bottle of porter on me, and a good warr'nt she always had to give it.

MARGARET. Time indeed it cracked into your skull to come to see him, Joan Bawn, and you hearing he was ailing a Sunday.

JOHANNA. Isn't that queer talk for you, black Mage, and you knowing our sow has bonnives, a big straak of hay down on us, and the servant girl after hoisting her sails ? Is there to be no credit due to me to be endangering my life coming here this roasting day, and he no loss in course, the poor old man, in comparison with me or the likes of me, the mother of a huge family ? (*Rises.*) Now, look here to me, Mage—the world won't clear you in my eyes for flinging our father into a settle-bed.

MARGARET (*comes towards JOHANNA*). If it's there I had him these twenty years itself, 'tisn't you should be reflecting on it, Joan Bawn, and the parish knowing the time he left you was over his being cut short in the butter.

JOHANNA. Oh, 'twas the queer notions made him go talking like that ! It's the same treatment he had from me as my children, and what more does a man want but his three

meals a day? He had his part of a good bed for himself. 'Twas a different story he had of it with his son Flurry, that put him to feed with the servants while Flurry and the wife would be having something tasty above in the room. 'Twas the good head I was to that thankless old man, and 'twasn't into the settle-bed I would fire him in the heel.

MARGARET. Don't be talking of settle-beds; it's to drownd him in the river you would if you had the trouble I had with him over himself and his old pie-dish, and it known to you he's been at manufacturing it ever since the first day he came under the roof to me, twenty years ago.

JOHANNA (*laughing*). 'Tis little excuse you have to be ill-using him over that innocent bit of folly; what harm would there be in it if he gave under making fifty pie-dishes itself?

MARGARET. 'Tis equal to you away out of the world in Glounasroan. 'Tisn't your neighbours do be hinting of the pie-dish to you, and 'tisn't your heart that's broke striving to keep them dull of his capers, capers that won't make the fortunes bigger by my children, and they going matchmaking in the coming time.

JOHANNA. Ug-gay, that little canter of his to injure them! Elaygil! Margaret, when the heart is set on doing a thing 'tisn't far to go to find an excuse for it.

MARGARET (*furiously*). 'Tis you that can be talking with your smooth skin, and a head of meat on you.

JOHANNA. Ug-gay! is it out of your mind you are entirely, and to call me fat? With not a pick on my four bones but that same smooth skin, and what envying have you of it?

MARGARET. There's no trouble on you with your rent paid and your money in the bank. It's lecturing me you'd be for being wild, and a dread in my heart at my family being made a hambug of over that old pie-dish. Look at that old

man to-day after he getting the bad weakness entirely that will sweep him, I am thinking, before the fall of night. It's the first time he was ever put in that settle-bed, I am telling it to you now, and it's there he is with his clothes on itself till the priest will come to anoint him.

JOHANNA. Mage ! yerra, 'tisn't telling me you are the coat, trouser, and waistcoat are on him ?

MARGARET. Amosta, I am then, and his two shoes itself if you said it. It's the tops of his nail-boots you can see there rising over the heel-boards. And it's a good job it is to have him in that settle-bed, for 'twasn't wanting to be anointed he was at all, nor 'twasn't a word about death he wanted to hear at all, because, if you please, there's a couple of ornaments wanting to his blessed old pie-dish !

JOHANNA (*throws up her hands*). Why were you keeping this from me, and I talking and wronging you ? He not in his clean linen before the priest ! He not willing to be anointed through means of an old pie-dish ! Isn't it cool you are, Margaret ? Isn't that the almightyest scandal that could overtake the good name of any farmer's family in the wide world ? While you'd be clapping your two hands together, the like of that would flash through the known world, and there isn't a child belonging to either of us but would be cut short in the fortune through means of it ! Is that the pie-dish I see in the table fornenst me ? Here, let me ketch a holt of it till I take it outside and smash it up again the wall.

[*Goes towards table ; EUGENE limps between her and pie-dish.*

EUGENE. Upon my own soul, Joan Bawn, if it's to clap a hand on it you will, I'll stick !

JOHANNA. Is it to think of stopping me you would, my old bocal of a fairy ? Come out of that, till I ketch it and smash it into smithereens !

MARGARET (*catches her*). Don't be making the case fifty times worse than it is itself. If he woke and found his pie-dish gone, it's his heart's blood he'd give with the dint of screeching.

JOHANNA. It's in dread of him you are, Mage, and maybe 'tis your own son that's pampering him and petting him and backing him up again you. I'll engage if that old man was with me I'd be having no hillibiloo, but it's a proper way I'd have him conduct himself in accordance with his years. Let us take him up in the room, undress him, and put him into his bed in his clean linen in a manner that we'll have him in the shape of a Christian before the priest in spite of himself and his old pagan pie-dish.

MARGARET. I wished we could, but there's no power. Oh, Peter, it's moving he is, it's waking up he is, glory be to God !

[LEUM *half-rises in settle-bed* ; JOHANNA and MARGARET *fall back a step* ; EUGENE *goes to fire*.]

LEUM. In the name of all that's good, where is it I am ? Ah, there's my pie-dish. I declare to my God, it's in the settle-bed I am ! (*Looks at MARGARET and JOHANNA*.) Ha ! I see ye, the pair of ye, and what coadjudering have ye now ? Is it you put me here, Margaret ? No, it's her pinched you to do it, seldom with her, the strap ! to be thinking of us or troubling us with her company.

MARGARET. I'll warrant 'tis no hand she had in it, then, and if she had itself what blame would you be having on her and the way you are ? It's no time for you to be making tapes, old man, and the right thing done by you: Lie back on your bolster ; it's I myself landed you in that settle-bed, leastways 'twas I got Jack and Eugene to do it, and there's great shame on you if it's going on and raging you'll be again.

LEUM. Eugene ! It's you, Eugene, she is after saying !

EUGENE. Sure, how could I help it and the way the case is with herself ? It's galled I am to have a hand in it, I promise you, but it's off my stems I'll go entirely if it's turning again me you'll be over it, and we ever and always the biggest of chums, grandfather Leum.

LEUM. It's as limber as ever I feel in myself, and it's tasby itself that's in me, Eugene. (*Throws off blankets.*) I'll warrant it's disappointed you'll be, big as the hurry you're in with me out of the world, begrudging me, maybe, the bit I eat.

MARGARET. It's a bad right for you to be saying that to me in the heel.

LEUM (*excitedly*). Maybe, but wherefore was it you coogled me into this settle-bed in the middle of the broad noonday ?

[*He scrambles out of the bed, shaking and panting.*

MARGARET. You grey and hoary old man, go back to your bed for yourself, go back to your bed at once, will you ?

[*Rushes at LEUM ; EUGENE catches her.*

EUGENE. In the name of the Lord, be easy with him, mother, or it's red sorrow will be on you in the day to come.

JOHANNA (*advancing to LEUM*). It's well I know, my poor old man, it's no mass you have on me at all, but if all the blowing you do be having out of Margaret isn't a pure hambug, it's said by her you should be now whatever, the day that's in it.

LEUM. Will you houl', you thing ! (*She catches him by arm ; he struggles.*) Let me go—go from me—or it's to scrope those two smooth cheeks I will with these nails and claw the two eyes out of your yellow head !

JOHANNA (*holding him by arm*). Now, father, aweinach, come up in the room and go in to your bed for yourself like

a Christian. Come, Margaret ! Come, Eugene ! and let ye be helping me with this poor man. Isn't it for his own sake I am, aroo ? [Presses him slowly towards bedroom door.

LEUM. Eugene ! Eugene !

EUGENE (*limping after JOHANNA*). Leave go of him, Joan Bawn, or it's to ram the tongs I will down your mortal throat.

[Drags JOHANNA off LEUM.]

LEUM. Good man, Eugene ! Beat her, slash her, and stamp on her carcass ! (*Goes to corner of table near pie-dish.*) Is the putty soft by you yet, Eugene ?

EUGENE (*taking up putty and rubbing it*). 'Tisn't that melted yet the way you want it, but it's on the points.

LEUM (*sits down at table and places his hands on pie-dish*). My wonderful pie-dish ! It's my heart's blood is in you, my pie-dish ! 'Tis little more will crown it, Eugene, and then it's for old Moll of Carraweira you will go, and Black Jack of Scartaglen, and old Teigue of Glounaneinta—to come and see it in all its glory. Them is all that's left of the friends of my youth ; and 'tis a lot are gone and cold surely, since I first gave under making my pie-dish twenty years ago.

[*His head falls slightly.*

MARGARET. There's noise outside, and there's two talking coming up the bawn. (*She runs to window ; JOHANNA runs to entrance-door.*) God above ! it's Jack and the priest.

[*Weeps.*

LEUM (*raising his head and screaming*). The priest ! The priest !

MARGARET (*wringing her hands*). Oh, wirra deelin ! what will I do ? what will I do ? (*Coming opposite LEUM.*) Old man, for the last time I beg it of you, will you lie back in your bed ? Will you do it for charity sake to please me itself ? (*Short pause.*) God forgive me now, then, but hear it from me in the heel, if it isn't wishing to me that it wasn't a cold

corpse you fell the time you got the weakness ; ah, wasn't it the biggest scruple that the death didn't sweep you in that slap and save me from this great disgrace !

JOHANNA. It's in on us they are, Margaret. (*Running to middle of floor.*) What devil tempted me—what foolery was on me to leave my good home in Glounasroan to meet this shame—the melt broke in me from the boiling sun of June, my legs all scrope from scorts of briars ? What lunacy was on me ? Let me hide in the room.

[JACK and FATHER TROY appear on threshold.

EUGENE takes off his hat. MARGARET and JOHANNA bend knees. JOHANNA then goes on her knees at fireplace.

FATHER TROY. Salvation to you all ! (*Seeing LEUM.*) What ! it isn't the sick man, Leum Donoghue, I find sitting up in his chair ? And it's for this man I was dragged off my gig and I having urgent business in the town of Lyre ! Will you good people never have any consideration for your priest, hurrying me where there's no urgency, and other times leaving your sick go to the points of drawing the breath and then hauling me out of my bed in the dead hour of the night ?

[JACK goes near JOHANNA.

LEUM. Ptse ! it's a deal of pains it makes for them what inconvenience they put on your reverence. Amostha, the devil a whack wrong with me, but they griping to have me in my grave, and hysing your reverence here thinking you'd hurry and frighten me into it !

FATHER TROY. I wished indeed, Leum Donoghue, it's your good colour I had on my face.

MARGARET. Don't be put astray by that old angashore, Father Troy, howbe the two cheeks are rosy now by him itself, for I am telling it to you it's the false flush entirely that's come on them two cheeks and the hour that is in it.

JOHANNA. Wisha, your reverence, father dear, 'tisn't put out you'd be by an old ancient man and he flushed, and 'tisn't taking notice of him you would and he ravelling in his talk as the like of him do, ever and always. But sure if he was young itself, says you, don't there be diseases going that makes the people look all the better and talk all the funnier the bigger they get stuck in them ; and, God help us ! more queer diseases hanging over the Christian than the blades of grass are numerous growing in the field. But what am I saying ? isn't it your reverence knows best of all that let what disease overtake a man—let him be young or let him be old—'tis a change for the better like would often come over him before the death swep him entirely.

FATHER TROY. That's true, my good woman, surely ; for it's great and wonderful changes I have seen before the awful moment when the poor soul escapes from its prison of mortal clay. Still, it's a queer way for this old man to be talking, if it's near his end he is, with that firm ring in his voice and all.

LEUM. Yerra, why shouldn't it be firm, your reverence, and I as lively as a bee in myself ? (*Laughs.*) 'Tis little respect the pair of them have for your cloth and the way they are splitting big lies fornenst your face. It's as healthy as a crow I am, in sure, and as sound as bell-metal itself, thank God ! and don't be spending any more of your time in this cabin, Father Troy.

JACK (*to JOHANNA*). Glory be to Peter ! Aunt Joan, isn't it a great shame ? It's roused entirely the old grey shandanagh is in himself, and it's dolled entirely I am on account of him, made a big liar of overright the priest itself. Wouldn't we let his reverence know of that pie-dish ?

JOHANNA. Hold your tongue, you fooleen, till I think of a good lie to whisper to the priest that'll make spir-spar of all the old man's raging. 'Tisn't roused he is at all, I am telling

you, but a little flutter that's on him. Ha ! what's on him now ? His head is falling ; it's quavering he is . . .

MARGARET (*running to table*). Father Troy, will you look at him now, and the change that's come over him ?

FATHER TROY (*moving towards LEUM*). My God ! it's grey he has turned in the features—quite grey.

LEUM (*half-raising his head*). Eugene, the putty, the putty !

EUGENE (*half-rising*). It's coming I am with it.

LEUM. The putty for my lovely pie-dish.

[His head falls ; he snores.]

FATHER TROY (*turning round*). A pie-dish ! What mysteries are here ?

JACK. It's no more secrecy is in it now whatever, Aunt Joan, and let me tell him the whole story and put the character of being a brazen liar off of me entirely. (*Moving towards priest.*) It's no liar I was, your reverence, and I hurrying you here, but it's in dread I was somehow to tell you thewhole of his complaint. It's that pie-dish, it's through means of that pie-dish, he—but (*to MARGARET*) maybe you'd be wild. Maybe 'tis wild she'd be if I told your reverence and the way she is—maybe 'tis wild she'd be.

MARGARET. Go on, you loobera, and tell it whole-ways now as you began it, and don't be telling it half-ways, making the case fifty times worse with us before the priest, as if 'tisn't misfortune enough that's on us this woful day.

JACK. Well then, your reverence, it's sour he is to be leaving this world because he hasn't a certain pie-dish fully made to his fancy, so that old Moll of Carraweira and few more might have a peep at it.

FATHER TROY. It isn't right the old man is, for wasn't there a strain of lunacy in the Pringles of Lisroe ?

MARGARET (*hotly*). Indeed there was not, but they being a little airy in themselves the same as the Carmodys of

Moinveerna, and 'tisn't far out the Carmodys were from your mother's people, the Shanahans, begging your reverence's pardon.

FATHER TROY. It's wicked he is, then !

MARGARET. It's devilment must be in that pie-dish, Father Troy.

FATHER TROY. What devilment are you talking of, woman ? It's the devil himself has Leum Donoghue body and soul, if through means of this pie-dish he is preventing him from thinking of his God.

JOHANNA. Wisha, father, we'll be keeping nothing back from you now, and let us tell you how it all came to be. 'Twas in the fort the thought of it must come to him, the big fort below our house in Glounasroan, where Mage Quirke slept of a day, and for six years after she couldn't put a leg under her till in the heel the half of a chaney mug came out of her instep that the good people flung at her, in course, the time she fell asleep. That old man slept in the same fort a week after what happened to Mage.

FATHER TROY. What superstitious foolery do I hear from you, woman ?

JOHANNA. It's only giving you the history of that pie-dish I am, your reverence, let the power of them that do be in the forts be little or much. 'Tis never before we heard talks of a pie-dish come from him, and I'll engage 'tisn't the likes of that was making pains for him ever till that day, and he always an industrious man about the fields.

FATHER TROY. Don't be talking, woman, don't be talking ; it's the devil has him !

JOHANNA. He slept in the fort the day he left me at Glounasroan, and Margaret can tell your reverence he started the pie-dish the morning after, and that's twenty years ago to-day.

LEUM (*raising his head suddenly*). Twenty years at my pie-dish, twenty years ! and thirty years before that thinking of it, but I neglecting to give under making it all that time with diversions coming between me and it. But it's fifty years the pie-dish is in my brain, and isn't it great work if I don't get time to finish it in the heel ? isn't it great work if I don't get time to finish it in the heel ?

FATHER TROY. Leum Donoghue, think of your poor soul, for it's plain to me now that your time is dwindling fast.

LEUM. It's lies you are telling me ; it isn't to die I can now. Eugene, the putty !

MARGARET (*crosses to LEUM*). Old man, will you have shame and listen to the Lord's anointed ?

LEUM. Go from me, woman, or it's a bitter curse you will get from my heart that will wither you and yours from the face of the world.

JOHANNA (*clasping her hands and looking sideways towards FATHER TROY*). St. Joseph intercede for my poor father !

[JACK returns to fireplace.]

MARGARET. The film is coming in your eye, old man, and will you give heed in time to the anointed of the Lord ?

JOHANNA. St. Joseph intercede for him ! (LEUM *shakes* ; *priest catches him by arm*.) Is it the rattle in his throat you heard, Jack ?

JACK. 'Twas some soart of thing in the shape of a click, you'd think.

JOHANNA. Oh, Father Troy, do something for him, and you having the power. St. Joseph and all the saints in heaven, pray for him !

FATHER TROY. My poor man, give yourself up now to the good God and to His Holy Mother, and put all thoughts of this sinful world away from your heart entirely.

LEUM. It's my pie-dish I am thinking of, I am telling you.

FATHER TROY (*soothingly*). My poor old man, what concern is it to you now, a miserable pie-dish? Leum Donoghue, let me administer to you the last rites of our Holy Mother, the Church.

LEUM (*screams and throws off priest*). 'Tisn't to be anointed I will. Go from me. (*Bends towards pie-dish and catches it.*) My pie-dish! my pie-dish!

FATHER TROY (*sternly and loudly*). Leum Donoghue, your hour has come!

MARGARET. Your hour has come, old man!

JOHANNA. His hour has come! Saints in heaven, pray for him before it is too late entirely!

LEUM (*giving a dazed look around him*). Was it the priest said my hour has come? (*Straightens himself up suddenly, holding pie-dish between his hands. He goes a step towards corner of table.*) It's black lies he is telling me. 'Tisn't my hour that has come to me. Good God above in heaven, 'tisn't without mercy you would be and to take me out of the world like this! Oh, the pain that's through me! Good God, give me time—it's surely you'll give me time—I pray for time to finish my pie-dish! Isn't this a terrible pain entirely? (*Shakes.*) God above, isn't it time I will get after all? Ah, 'tis killing me that pain is. Good God in heaven, it's time I must get—if it isn't time from God I'll get, maybe the devil will give me time! Let the devil himself give me time, then, let him give me time to finish my pie-dish, and it's his I'll be for ever more, body and soul!

[*He shakes. The pie-dish falls and breaks. He screams and falls back on chair.*

EUGENE. There, it's in bits now, and what it was or what it wasn't no one in the wide world will be a pin's point the wiser for ever more.

[*Priest goes and places his hand on LEUM's heart.*

JACK. It's a scruple, Aunt Joan, if it's gone entirely without the rites he is and the priest up to his hip itself.

FATHER TROY (*turning round*). He is dead, and 'tis likely he is damned !

MARGARET (*clapping her hands*). Oh, not damned !

JOHANNA (*catching JACK by arm*). Dead and damned, Jack, and it's disgraced we'll be over him during the duration of time through the length and breadth of Europe.

FATHER TROY. What folly and vanity there do be in this short world ! But what was in this at all ? (*Takes up piece of pie-dish.*) What was in this at all ?

MARGARET (*taking priest by sleeve*). But it isn't certain entirely that it is damned he is, Father Troy ? (*Pause. She lets go priest's arm and goes towards corpse.*) 'Tisn't damned he is, and no sin on him but what he did in the heel. But it's dead he is, and where was the good in my being too hard and bitter with him in his latter end ! (*Throwing herself on her knees.*) May the Lord have mercy on his soul !

CURTAIN.



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